The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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IN A CLOUD RIFT.

Upon our loftiest White Mountain peak,
Filled with the freshness of untainted air,
We sat, nor cared to listen, nor to speak
To one another; for the silence there
Was eloquent with God's presence. Not a sound
Uttered the winds in their unhindered sweep
Above us, through the heavens. The gulf profound
Below us seethed with mists,—a sullen deep
From thawless ice-caves of a vast ravine
Rolled sheeted clouds across the lands unseen.

How far away seemed all that we had known
In homely levels of the earth beneath,
Where still our thoughts went wandering! "Turn thee!" Blown
Apart before us, a dissolving wreath
Of cloud framed in a picture on the air;
The fair long Saco valley, whence we came;
The hills and lakes of Ossipee; and there
Glimmers the sea! Some pleasant, well-known name
With every breath to memory hastens back,—
Monadnock, Winnipesaukee, Merrimack.

On widening vistas broader rifts unfold.
Far off, into the waters of Champlain
Great sunset summits dip their flaming gold.
There winds the dim Connecticut,—a vein
Of silver through aërial green; and here
The upland street of rural Bethlehem;
And there the roofs of Bethel. Azure clear
Shimmers the Androscoggin; like a gem
Umbagog glistens; and Katahdin gleams,—
Or is it some dim mountain of our dreams?

Our own familiar world, not yet half known,
Nor loved enough, in tints of Paradise
Lies there before us,—now so lovely grown
We wonder what strange film was on our eyes
Ere we climbed hither. But again the cloud,
Descending, shuts the beauteous vision out.
Between us the abysses spread their shroud.
We are to earth, as earth to us, a doubt.
Dear home folk, skyward seeking us, can see
No crest or crag where pilgrim feet may be.

Who whispered unto us of life or death
As silence closed upon our hearts once more?
On heights where angels sit perhaps a breath
May clear the separating gulfs. A door
May open sometimes betwixt earth and heaven,
And life's most haunting mystery be shown
A fog-drift of the mind, scattered and driven
Before the winds of God; no vague unknown
Death's dreaded path,—only a curtained stair;
And heaven but earth raised into purer air.

—*Lucy Larcom.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

"Hallowed be thy name!"—that is, "Hallowed be thy character!" And what we know of that character, what we think of it, we have gained from our fellow-men, in whom their Father has acted and thought and loved since the beginning. . . . The thoughts and words of those men who have earned the love and honor of the human race have made known to us how God thinks and how he speaks; and from the whole of this vast experience of love and

justice, truth and holiness, pity and power, disclosed to us by man,—the divine within us always moving outward into human act, —we have built up the character of God.

Men say: "We know nothing really about him whom you call God. He may be only the creation of our own minds." And that is true. We have no demonstrated evidence, and the assertion that God is cannot be proved. But it must be remembered that the negative can be just as little proved as the positive. The proof of the one or the other cannot be given in this world. If reasoning alone is appealed to, we have to say we cannot know. Then the question comes, On which theory are the problems of our existence best and most clearly solved,—on the theory that there is no Being of love and truth, infinitely perfect, but only an imaginary personage built out of our own desires, or on the theory that there is one beyond us, the Fountain of us and of the universe, and that he himself has through us built up the idea of his character in our thought?

Still, though much may be done in that way to make it probable that God is, it does not amount to demonstration. It is then that faith steps in. I cannot prove the positive: I cannot prove the negative. . . . But I will believe that what man has made God to be, or, rather, what the best of men have said that God ought to be, he is, and that this idea of him has not been made only out of the thought or the desires of man, but out of God's own thought, and God's love working in me and in the human race from the beginning. He is; and he is my Father,—perfect Love, infinite Goodness, absolute Truth. . . . Hallowed be thy character, my Father and my God!

And how shall I hallow it, how be true to my prayer? There are a thousand answers, but those I shall give belong to the common life of man.

The first and most proper way to hallow a character is to be that character as nearly as we can. What we believe God is, that we shall become. We have conceived, for example, what perfect justice is; and that is an ideal which we would better make real if we are to pray with a clear conscience, "Hallowed be thy name!"

There is no attribute of God of which we take less notice than justice; for probably there is nothing which interferes more seriously with our worldly wealth, position, business, and amusement than any attempt to be equal to the highest standard of justice. This attempt means to get rid of all prejudice in our personal judgments, to get rid of the common maxims of society both on morals and in morals, to see things that are called good or sinful just as we may suppose God sees them, to judge of wrong, not according to courts of law, but seeing through the eyes of God. It is, in party strife, to give full credit to an opponent, in home life not to let hot temper, jealousy, human love, weakness, or sloth to lead you into acts which favor or blame unduly the members of the household. It is in business life to take no undue advantage, not to build your prosperity on the misfortune of another, not to use things not your own for any purpose whatever, not to keep those who work for you at unjust wages,—unjust not according to supply and demand, but according to the demand of God's justice in you; and, on the workman's part, to give honest work, just to what your thought believes to be good. It is the temper of justice in all things that we want in every work, in every motive, in the work of the intellect, in the evolution of the spirit life which we live alone and in secret with God. . . .

What has been said of the hallowing of justice by the being just in life, and at every point in life, is to be said also, and with the same severity, of doing and motive, of all the other qualities which we conceive in the character of God,—of truth, of pity, of righteousness, of loving kindness. The proper way to hallow them is to be their image. It is a tremendous indictment of our daily life to recognize that this is true: it is a tremendous call upon us to ask us to fulfil it. It leaves no moment of the day, no shred of our work, no motive of the heart, no act or speech at home or abroad, without its aspiration, without its check. But the loveliness and the glory of the thing to be attained ought to enable us to face the indictment and to obey with happiness the call. If we are true to the ideal held in "Hallowed be thy name," we finally become that which we hallow: we become at one with God, his character our character, his life and rapture ours. . . .

And there are two other aspects of the

matter. We may hallow God and his character as seen in nature,—in that part of the universe we feel through our senses first, and then in the soul; and we may hallow him as we see him living in humanity.

Not the victim of our moods, we would feel that in nature which is not us, and, losing ourselves, possess a lasting joy in nature, the Eternal Order, and the Infinite Beauty. . . . "Put off thy shoes from thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground,"—that should be the attitude of the soul while we stand by the sea, or on the moor, or under the woodland places that we love. And, if you would lift the whole into infinity, see and hear what mortal eye and ear cannot distinguish,—the Spirit below the material, the River of Life below all life, the Love whose smile kindles the universe,—let your spirit go forth from yourself, feel the spirit of thought and love which is moving everywhere, then, in this passage of the spirit into touch with the Spirit of God, you will hallow his character, and fulfil this prayer in all your life with nature. . . .

Hallow God's character in man. Hallow him in all the truth which men of science have taught us, and hallow God in them. Hallow him in all the beauty which the artists of the world have created for us, and hallow the Divine Life in them. Hallow him in all the noble work of law and government and progress which men have wrought out for man, and hallow God in the men. History, art, and science will not be less noble, but more noble, when you link them to an everlasting character, in whom all the work and all the men are everlasting.

Hallow his character in all those who have blessed and redeemed the world by love and holiness,—in the great prophets, in the saints and martyrs, in the thousand thousand unknown, whose gentle love has been a garden of flowers where the troubled have found comfort. . . .

And, if you see them as the revealers of God, as charged with his character, you will be saved from the base and carping criticism which prefers to dwell on their mistakes and failures,—is pleased by discovery of the evil.

It is never useful to manifest the evil and the failure: it is always useful to manifest their opposite. Goodness, being manifested, enchants and allures, and at the same time makes clear the evil; and, in the light of the goodness you make manifest, the evil dies. . . . Not only in the good hallow God's character, hallow it also in the evil. In them the divine lies hidden. Below their evil the powers of love and truth, of justice and goodness, are in abeyance. . . . This is no condoning of evil, no hiding of it. The evil, when the good is called forth, is seen for the first time in all its ugliness; and the doer of the evil for the first time turns from it with abhorrence. . . .

When this hallowing of God's character in our own inner life, in nature, and in the men of our own time, has become the habit of the soul, we see him in all the history of humanity, and hallow, reverence, love, and rejoice in the whole evolution of the Divine in the human past, behold it unfolding in the present, and prophesy its expansion in the future, until, borne on the joy of faith, we see at last the complete humanity, the perfect man united forever to the absolute Divinity, and hear the innumerable host crying from eternity to eternity, in awe and love and rapture, "Hallowed be thy name!" *Stopford A. Brooke.*

THE STILL HOUR.

INNER SUNSHINE.

The day with light its genial self engirds.
The trees are glad with fluty voices dear.
"Thou art my God!" When I say o'er those words,
I see a light beyond the day, and hear
Voices far richer than the songs of birds.

Mine eyes with happy tears then overswim.
The thoughts I have are sweetest that can be.
My mind's a cup with love above the brim.
Fine incense circles around all I see.
In every sound I hear a holy hymn.

Thou art my God! Thou, Father, thou, my friend;
My Saviour, thou; the eternal Lord of all!
O thought which doth all deepest thought transcend!
Beneath whose painful stress well may I fall
In love and wonder which should know no end!

—*Henry Septimus Sutton,* 1854.

The best name by which we can think of God is Father. It is a loving, deep, sweet,

heart-touching name; for the name of father is in its nature full of inborn sweetness and comfort. Therefore, also, we must confess ourselves children of God; for by this name we deeply touch our God, since there is not a sweeter sound to the Father than the voice of the child.—*Luther.*

Wish to be a child of God, and then sunshine and frost, and friends and enemies, and youth and age, and business and pleasures, and all things will help to make you one. The holy spirit is a spirit, and not one mood of the mind; it is not Sabbatical, but daily; it is not a morning and an evening temper, but a perpetual presence in us.

Morning and evening in prayer I will strive to feel God, and the whole day through I will be glad in him; and every pleasure, I will say to myself, is from him. So, through faith, I will see the hand of God above me; and I will see it often, and get used to the sight, so that, when it shuts upon my soul to withdraw it from the world, I shall not be afraid, but glad.—*Mountford.*

THE BIBLE CLASS.

"THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT" IN LUKE.

Scholars have never been able to decide definitely whether there were *two* sermons preached at separate times and places, one of which is reported by Matthew and one by Luke. The Commentaries do not help us very much, though they give a number of excellent and forcible reasons why *all* theories advanced in regard to these two passages are incorrect and impossible to maintain.

Abandoning the Commentaries and falling back on the narrative in the New Testament, the sequence of events would lead us to believe that the sermon in Luke is not the same as the one in Matthew, but a special missionary sermon for the benefit of the apostles. That certain passages are nearly the same may be explained in many ways.

As the life of Jesus was in danger (see last lesson), it became of great importance that his work should be established on a firm footing, so that it should not die with him. To do this, his disciples must be encouraged, prepared, and instructed.

It should be observed that we find and make for ourselves needless difficulties in the precepts of Jesus. These difficulties come from two sources: —

1. A wrong idea of the Bible.
2. A wrong idea of Jesus himself.

So long as we think of the Bible as being in every word inspired and infallible, we cannot study the meaning of each passage with candor and freedom. And so long as we think of Jesus as quite different from other men—not only greater, better, and wiser, but essentially different—we lose the whole force of his words; for we imagine them given *ex cathedra*, from a pulpit, so to speak, and having some occult, mysterious power, to be equally applicable to all men, at all times, seasons, and places, and under all circumstances.

But Jesus was not always in the pulpit. Sometimes he *conversed;* sometimes he told a story; he said words of encouragement to the broken-hearted; he gave a message of pity and forgiveness to the sinful woman; because she *needed* comfort, he comforted her; he told the young ruler to sell his goods and give to the poor. But it does not follow that every rich man should sell his property and give the proceeds to the poor, nor that the hardened sinner should be treated in the same manner as the crushed and heart-broken penitent.

A stumbling-block has been found in some of the sayings of Jesus which we will now consider.

"Love your enemies."

"Unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other."

"And him that taketh away thy cloak, forbid not to take thy coat also."

It has been justly said that society could not be carried on on such a system as this. Are Christians everywhere to allow themselves to be maltreated,—nay, to invite abuse? Are we to encourage the dishonest by bestowing our other belongings on them, after they have possessed themselves of all they could take?

The difficulty is in the *reading*, not in the words. These sayings of Jesus are not *ethical maxims*, but *practical advice*. As universal laws, applicable everywhere and always, they are impracticable. As a means

to a certain end, they are full of practical wisdom.

We think of Jesus as so entirely spiritual that we forget that he was preparing his apostles for a struggle with the world and with men of the world. The difficulties and trials they would meet, he foresaw. He wished to arm them against these difficulties. He was not *preaching a sermon*,—not according to our idea of a sermon: he was giving *wise advice*.

Let us take the first saying we have quoted. "*Love your enemies.*"

This seems a hard duty. But set it aside as a moral maxim, and see how it shines with the deepest, highest wisdom.

Have you an enemy? The danger is that your own heart will grow bitter. A "corroding poison" of hatred fills it, or at least of *resentment*. Now, your enemy has done you a real injury,—the worst injury of all. Your spiritual growth is checked. Your spiritual eye is clouded. The "kingdom of heaven within you" is destroyed. You know this is a wrong state of things: you struggle to forgive your enemy, but in vain. The knowledge of the injury he has done you comes back again and again.

The *only* way out of this miserable condition is to love him. "You *must* love your enemy if you would not hate him." Rise to a higher plane: let the divine spirit that is always waiting to be gracious fill and strengthen you, and what was *impossible* as a mere *duty* is now easy and natural. How short is life! How near are God and heaven! How can we, the children of God, waste any time in hating each other?

The saying, "Unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other," is usually regarded as figurative. "We are not to take it literally," we hear said.

Perhaps not; but, then, how are we to take it? It means *something;* else Jesus might as well have merely said, "Be kind, be forgiving." He did not speak words of wind: his words had a meaning.

John, the apostle, once said with deep wisdom, "The life is the light of man." We have a more prosaic phrase: "We learn by experience." Some of the words of Jesus are hard to understand until we have lived through a real experience: then they become illuminated.

Is it not possible that the lesson here taught is that, when a man has an important work to accomplish, he cannot, he must not, waste strength and time in fighting for his rights and in resenting petty injuries? If he is running to save a drowning man, and some one catches his cloak, does he not throw everything down,—not for the benefit of his assailant, but to *free* himself from hindrance and obstacle?

Does not every one engaged in any important work learn this lesson? Every charity, every kind of philanthropic work, is hindered more by dissension among workers, by self-seeking, by petty, interested aims, than by anything else. Now Jesus says: "Throw aside *all* personal feeling. Do not think of your rights at all. You have something more important to think of. Do not resent *any* injury, *any* insult."

For most of us the blow on the cheek means rudeness, unjust attacks, slander, the invasion of our rights; and all this we must learn to bear, for there are many times when self-defence against even gross injustice injures the work we have most at heart.

But how was it with the apostles? They had the greatest work to accomplish that the world ever saw. That work would be more injured than any other by the indulgence of any personal feeling. And the injuries to which they were exposed were not mere words: it was *literal* blows which they would be called on to endure. All this Jesus foresaw; and with no mere idealism, no impossible theorizing, but with deepest practical wisdom, we may suppose him saying: "I now leave my work to you,—to you, Peter, to you, John and James, you sons of thunder, who wanted to call down fire from heaven on the inhospitable village. But remember this: if you are to do this work well and wisely, cast out *all* personal feeling from your hearts, bear any and every extremest insult and injury as if it were nothing."

"LOVE *your enemies. Do good to them which hate you. . . .*

"*And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also.*" L. F. C.

No one ever deserved to be loved; but being loved makes us more deserving than anything else does. —*J. F. C.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[*Send all matter for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.*]

BEFORE WRITING TO ASK FOR BOOKS, DO NOT FAIL TO READ THE FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS.

1. If you see a book offered in the Book Club which you desire to read, write directly to the address of the person who offers it. If she receives more than one request, the addresses of those to whom she cannot respond may be sent to the Book Club, and the request printed there.

2. If you have a book or paper to give or lend, write directly to the Book Club as above, and offer it with your address.

3. In sending a book, enclose, when possible, a P.O. card for response, already addressed.

4. In thanking the person who has sent you a book, always mention the name of the book. Say, "I have received 'Black Beauty,'" or whatever the book may be; not, "I have received *that book*." This saves a busy person a good deal of time. Otherwise, she must consult her list constantly to find out what book has been received safely.

N.B.— Do not send books to the Book Club. Send only the *offer* to the club. To send the *book* involves packing it *twice* and paying postage *twice*, where once would suffice.

Those who offer books frequently receive notes, saying, "Shall I return you this book, or keep it, or pass it on?" *Unless otherwise stated, all* books offered in this department are *given*, and the postage paid.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking, "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it: else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

Please write only on one side of the paper in sending lists or letters to the secretary.

A four-pound package is the most that can be sent by *mail*. The postage on four pounds of *magazines* is 16 cts., on four pounds of *books* 32 cts.

Postage on magazines and all periodicals (weighing less than four pounds), 1 cent for four ounces; on bound books, 1 cent for two ounces. *Paper* books are now sent by mail at the same rate as magazines, *when issued periodically*.

Will any mother who would like to have "Gentle Measures in Training the Young," by Jacob Abbott, or any one who would like "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.?

It is contrary to our rules to send requests for anything but reading matter. Those who infringe this rule will be dropped from our list.

To any one paying postage Mr. H. C. Wellman, Boston Athenæum, Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., will be glad to send: Sir Walter Scott, "Tales of a Grandfather," 2d and 4th series, 2 vols.; Rosa Abbott, "Tommy Hickup" (child's story); "Ninety-nine Choice Recitations and Readings," 1st series; J. W. White, "First Lessons in Greek," 2d ed.; T. S. Hart, "Grammar of the English Language"; Maria Edgeworth, "Patronage" (a novel), 3 vols.; "Franklin Fifth Reader"; E. M. Sewell, "Dictation Exercises"; Felter's "Complete Arithmetic"; Whiton, "Three Months' Preparation for Reading Xenophon"; A. Combe, "Management of Infancy"; George Eliot, "Silas Marner"; Julia Leonard, "Children's Songs" (poetry).

Mrs. M. Rhodes, Fleming, Colorado, offers the *Housekeeper*. No year mentioned.

The following books are offered by the First Church, Boston. Address Miss E. W. Daggett, North Cohasset, Mass. "A Bow of Orange Ribbon," Amelia Barr; "Pris," author of "Miss Toosey's Mission"; "The Secret of Narcisse," Edmund Gosse; "Miss Gascoigne," Mrs. J. H. Riddell; "But yet a Woman," A. S. Hardy; "Called Back," Hugh Conway; "Silence of Dean Maitland," Grey; "Only the Governess," Rosa N. Cary; "The Story of Philip Methuen," Needell; "Woman's Friendship," Grace Aguilar; "Diana," Mrs. Oliphant; "Beatrice," 2 vols., Julia Kavanagh; "A Hidden Foe," Henty; "Mignon's Husband," John Strange Winter; "The Keeper of the Keys," Robinson; "Green Pastures and Piccadilly," Wm. Black; "Society and Solitude," Emerson.

Poetry.

"Gleanings from the Poets"; "Thanatopsis," Bryant; "Companion Poets"; "In the Harbor," Longfellow.

Children's Books.

"Alice's Adventures in Wonderland"; "Stamp Collector's Guide"; Holden's "Book on Birds"; "Grandfather's Nell"; "White and Red, Life among the North-west Indians"; "Miriam Brandon"; "Rhoda's Corner"; "City Sparrows, and who fed them," a sequel to "The Ministering Children," 2 vols.; "Miriam Rosenbaum," a story of Jewish life; "Louie's Last Term at St. Mary's."

Educational Books.

Franklin's "Elementary Arithmetic"; Cornell's "Primary Geography," Warren Colburn's "First Lessons in Arithmetic"; "Dramatic French Reader"; Greenleaf's "Elements of Geometry"; "Elements of Analytical Geometry"; "Elements of Rhetoric and Composition"; Fasquelle's "French Grammar"; Casselle's "French Reader"; "Tales in French for Young Persons"; "Recueil Choisi"; "The Normal Music Course."

Also some back numbers of *London Truth*, *Harper's*, and *Scribner's* magazines.

Any mother who would like to correspond on the subject of kindergarten can address Miss Harriette Ryan, 41 Holyoke Street, Cambridge, Mass., who will consider it a pleasure to send all the help which her years as a teacher in public kindergarten would enable her to give.

The Philadelphia Branch offers. Address Miss Helen B. Goodwin, 2036 Gratz Avenue, Philadelphia, Penn.

Spirit of Missions, 1895; *Century*, 1894; *Lend a Hand*, 1892–94; the *Demorest*, 1894; the *Unitarian*, 1892–95; *Christian Register*, 1892–95; *Cosmopolitan*, 1893–94; *Scribner's*, 1890–92; *Munsey's*, 1894; "Sunshiny Stories," James Payn; "Stories of Doctors"; Lowell's "Poems"; Longfellow's "Poems"; Tennyson's "Poems"; Emerson's "Essays"; "Great Expectations," Dickens; *Home Queen*, 1894; "A Trip to Glen Island"; "Historic Philadelphia"; *Christian Herald*, 1894; New Testament; *Chambers's Magazine*, 1875; *Blackwood's Magazine*, 1875; "History of Lowell, Mass."; "Description of Westminster Palace"; "Battle of Bunker Hill" (Centennial, 1875); *Littell's Living Age*, 1887–92; the *Sower*, 1892–93; the *American*, 1893; the *Nineteenth Century*, 1891–94; "Robert Elsmere," Ward; *Harper's Bazar*, 1894–95; the *Problem of Life*, 1892, 1894; *Youth's Companion*, 1885–92; "Lessons of the Saviour" (Unitarian; questions and answers suited for Sunday-school teaching); "Every Sunday" (collection of hymns and lessons for every Sunday, for Sunday-school); "Our Mutual Friend," Dickens; the *Rostrum* (topics of the day), 1894; "Young Musgrave," Mrs. Oliphant; "Will Ackroyd's Socialism"; "Devereux," "Last of the Barons," Lytton; "Shandon Bells," Black.

The Lowell Branch offers *Primary Education* for 1893 (11 numbers) and *Decorator and Furnisher* (25 numbers), 1882–88. Address Miss A. F. Anderson, 31 Anne Street, Lowell, Mass.

REQUESTS.

READ DIRECTIONS AT BEGINNING OF BOOK CLUB BEFORE WRITING.

We are sorry to state that our Book Club secretary, Mrs. Hallett, has been obliged to give up the work for the next few months. Until farther notice requests (as well as offers) may be sent to MRS. W. B. NICHOLS, 3 WEBSTER STREET, ALLSTON, MASS., *who has kindly taken Mrs. Hallett's place for the summer.*

Libraries.

Standing requests for libraries from:—

Rev. George H. Taylor, Rocky Ford, Colorado;

Mrs. O. A. Langston, Sidney, Comanche County, Texas;

Mrs. C. S. Stowell, Magnolia, Boulder County, Colorado;

Mr. Davis M'Carn, Anamosa, Iowa;

Mrs. D. Jayne, Cayuta, Schuyler County, New York;

Mrs. Emma Miner, Lisbon, New Hampshire;

Stephen D. Rhoden, La Pine, Crenshaw County, Alabama;

The lady who has been sending the *Christian Register* to Mrs. May D. Jones, North Platte, Nebraska, is obliged to discontinue it. Will any one who can send it regularly address Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.?

Will any one who has copies of any works by Holmes or by Bryant kindly send a line to the editor, who will give the address of a place where they will be valued and useful? Write to Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Magnolia, Mass.

Mrs. M. E. Oades has not been able to answer letters lately. She has been seriously ill, and is now in St. Peter's Hospital in Olympia, Washington, awaiting a surgical operation.

Maud Compton, Parkerville, Washington County, Georgia, thanks all who have so kindly sent her reading matter. Would be

pleased to receive any of Mozoomdar's works or any Unitarian literature.

Mrs. Susie R. Thornton, Madisonville, Virginia, would like hymn-books suitable for Sabbath-school use.

The address of Florence E. Page and Maud Ides should be Corinth, Maine, rather than East Corinth as printed in the June number.

Mrs. F. A. Wright, Straw, North Carolina, asks for "Looking Backward," "Robinson Crusoe," and "Arabian Nights."

Miss Bettie Furguson, Latham, Baldwin County, Alabama, would like the "Life and Times of Elizabeth Prentiss."

Mrs. Mary E. Roy, Washington, Louisiana, would like very much to receive a copy of the "Christian's Secret of a Happy Life" and "Stepping Heavenward."

Mrs. D. Warner, Grove, Geauga County, Ohio, asks for Ancient History and "Wide Awake Pleasure Book."

Mrs. E. A. Johnson, Montevallo, Missouri, would be pleased to receive "Swiss Family Robinson" for her son. Other reading would also be acceptable.

Mrs. Minnie Josephson, Olympia, Washington, asks for reading for herself and children, the eldest a boy, fifteen years.

To Mrs. Susan P. French.—You forgot to enclose your address, and so it was impossible either to answer your letter or send any of the books.

B. B. Beddome, Minnedosa, Manitoba, Canada, asks for "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

Mrs. Sarah Gilbert, Atlantic, Iowa, would be glad to receive "Pendennis" and "Vicar of Wakefield."

Any of T. S. Arthur's works will be thankfully received by Mrs. I. E. Rice, Oakland, Oregon.

Mrs. M. E. Stovall, Glade Springs, Virginia, would like a geography and a third or fourth reader for her grandson, also reading matter for herself.

Miss Edith Patten, W. R. C. Home, Madison, Lake County, Ohio, asks for reading for herself and mother, both sufferers from rheumatism. Would especially like any of the "Pansy" books.

I address you in behalf of a little society of Christian workers, situated in a country district in Southern Indiana. We have no church or Sabbath-school near us. We have organized a little society, meeting every Sabbath afternoon to read the Scriptures and pamphlet sermons. We have singing, text-reading, and talks from the members. We need books so much. They would be of inestimable value, and would fill one of our greatest needs. Every member is from the country,—farmers' wives, sons, and daughters,—and is unable to obtain them by purchase. Only those who are that, and situated where opportunities for mental and spiritual growth are so limited, can realize what it would mean to us to secure even a very few books. History, poems, biography, novels of moral tone, anything that women of refined taste would care to read, would be so thankfully received. Address Mrs. E. L. Venter, Brookville, Indiana, Franklin County.

Will some one send reading suitable for young girls to Miss Jane Coulsey, Fay Creek, New Brunswick, Canada? She is a cripple from inflammatory rheumatism following typhoid fever, lives in a place where there are only twelve families, and can get no reading except Sunday-school books. I heard of her from the matron of the hospital in which she was for several months a patient (Victoria Hospital, Fredericton, New Brunswick). She is very fond of reading, and would be grateful for any good books. I would especially like her to have "Adam Bede," "The Mill on the Floss," "Scenes in Clerical Life," and "Brother Jacob"; Dickens's "Old Curiosity Shop" and "Dombey and Son"; Shakspere's "King John," any of his comedies, and "The Merchant of Venice; any of Miss Thackeray's works; any of Mrs. Gaskell's, Harriet Martineau's, or Charlotte Yonge's; any of Mrs. Ewing's, especially "Jackanapes" and the "Story of a Short Life"; Hesba Stretton's "Jessica's First Prayer" and "Max Kromer"; any of D. M. Mulock's, especially "John Halifax"; and any of Mrs. Charles's and E. John's. This may seem a good deal to ask for one person; but, of course, I do not expect her to get it all. Indeed, I sincerely hope that she may not get too many at one time. I only mean to indicate the style of books most desirable for a young girl, which

should be real literature, and interesting, but not sensational or too exciting. I forgot to say any of Lyde Palmer's, particularly "John Jack"; any of Mary Howitt's, particularly "Midsummer Eve"; and the "Story of Ida."

Will those who send books to her kindly remember the caution given in a late number of the *Cheerful Letter* in regard to sending books to Canada? If sent by express, mark the parcel "Paid through to Fay Creek," and send the receipt to her. In any case mark the parcel "Second-hand books." Persons sending to her or wishing to do so may communicate with either Mrs. Nichols or with A. L. Watson, secretary of the Post-office Mission, Box 104, North Pembroke, Mass.

Dear Cheerful Letter Friends,—I have taken our dear little paper for two years. Have never sent any request to Mrs. Hallett until now. I am nearly sixty years old, have many infirmities, am very much isolated, and shut in by poor health and circumstances. Was a school-teacher when young, am a great reader. There are so many books I want to see before I get entirely helpless. Some of these are "Ida May," an anti-slavery story of thirty-five years ago, the name of author I forget; also "Mr. Barnes of New York," "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," "One Summer," "The Handsome Humes," "Marcella," "A Hard Lesson," "A Loyal Lover," "Highest References," "Wilfrid Cumbermede," "Esther," a book for girls, "Old Marguerite," "Innocent." I would be glad to have these; and, as I receive, so I will freely give. The first three I am *very* anxious to get, also I would like a late year of *Leslie's Popular Monthly*, or *Demorest*, *Scribner*, or *each*. Many will share in my enjoyment. Do not think me grasping, dear friends. I am far from libraries or society. I have no daughter, and many of my hours are filled with pain and weariness. To the kind friend who has sent me Unitarian sermons I would say, Do not send any more, the want seems to be filled. Yours, I. H. N. Mrs. N. D. Huggins, Valley Farm, Sicily, Ohio.

I am in one sense a shut-in, not from ill health, but family cares. I have a family of five small children, and our finances have been such for several years that I have not been able to keep help. Consequently, I seldom leave my own door-yard. All the recreation I get is a few minutes I will take for reading. Everything has been cut to the "must have," so we have had to give up reading we enjoyed. By a sacrifice we take the *Companion* for the older children. Any magazines or books will be appreciated by several families, and I will be glad to pass them to them. Address Mrs. May Belliville, Terrace Park, Hamilton County, Ohio.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

HOME ETIQUETTE.

In the May number of *The Cheerful Letter* a correspondent asks, after relating two examples of insufferable rudeness to children, "What is a poor mother to do when beset by such examples as these?" I would say, Make them examples of what is to be avoided. A gentleman who was famous for his perfect manners was asked where he learned them. He said, "From impolite people"; and I have learned many a lesson in etiquette in the same way. Many people have an idea that children do not expect politeness, and do not notice a want of it; and so the merciless little critics have it all their own way.

But, seriously, ought not the subject of *home* etiquette to receive more attention? We give our children particular directions how to behave *in company*. "Aren't you ashamed to act so *when there are strangers in the house?*" is the common form of rebuke; and the natural inference in the mind of the child is that it is "no matter" when there are *not* strangers present.

I have in mind a family of boys whom I have heard spoken of as "perfect little gentlemen," and such was my own opinion of them until I was rudely disenchanted by a visit of several weeks at their home. By some mistake I arrived an hour sooner than I was expected, and found my kind hostess away from home. Chilled, both literally and metaphorically, weary, and hungry, I was received by her son, a boy of twelve years. As soon as the greetings were over, he invited me with a brusque cordiality to *hold up my foot*, pulled off my wet rubbers and then my wraps, wheeled the softest

chair into the warmest corner for me, brought me a footstool and the cheering intelligence that supper would be ready soon. Then he entertained me with boyish talk until his mother came. By that time I had recovered my spirits, which had sunk to several degrees below zero, and was able to present quite a cheerful exterior. That was the true politeness which springs from the heart, and in such these boys are not wanting; but, as for *etiquette*, they might as well be dogs and cats! I still keep the memory of that evening in a very warm corner of my heart, and it does seem ungracious in me to record the fact that that same boy shocked me the next morning by appearing at the breakfast table in his shirt-sleeves! It was the same way with them all. I was "one of themselves" (a doubtful compliment by the way), and it was no longer necessary to wear their "company manners" before me. They would sit and talk to their mother or me with their heads covered, rush up and down stairs, and slam doors in a way very startling to sensitive nerves, eat beans with their knives, "because you can eat them faster"; and one of them, when he dined with me alone, ate his dinner standing on the rounds of two chairs,—a gymnastic feat which excited my wonder more than my admiration. Yet I forgave them all when I saw that they had really no idea that they were doing anything offensive, and were trying their best to make my visit pleasant, which they certainly did in many ways. I know that, if they had had the least idea of how uncomfortable they made me feel, they would have behaved better; and I do think it a pity that they had not been taught that it is a part of true politeness, though possibly the least part, to observe a few simple rules which we call, collectively, etiquette. I know that some mothers *do* try, with varying success, to train their children in these little things. Some fail, because the effort is not continuous. Bad manners are checked one day, and endured the next. "I do not want to be always nagging my children," said a mother. "I do not care what they do, if it is not morally wrong." There is no necessity for nagging. Indeed, constant training will make "nagging" unnecessary. My own dear mother taught her children to say "please" and "thank you" as soon as we could speak; and those words were literally a "mother tongue" to us. She omitted, however, to teach us to ask to be excused from the table; and, to this day, I must confess to a feeling of embarrassment every time I ask to be excused.

It ought to be a matter of course for a child to come to the table neatly and completely dressed, to sit quietly occupying his whole chair, to ask politely to be helped unless the article wished for is within easy reach, and to be *comparatively* quiet while in the house. Out-of-doors, a boy should be taught to remove his hat on meeting his mother, and a girl to speak to her pleasantly as she would to a stranger. Wet boots and rubbers should be removed on entering, as of course should a boy's head covering. I have seen a boy seven years old go in Sunday-school, walk up the aisle, and take his seat, never removing his hat until reminded by his teacher. How much mortification his mother would have saved him and herself if she had taught him to take it off at home!

If taught from the first and *always insisted upon*, these little habits will very soon be as easy and natural as play; and it is not to make children feel awkward and restrained that I make these suggestions, but to save them from being so. Many mothers will, I know, agree with me. Others will call me "fussy," and think it quite unnecessary, after all that I have said, to sign myself *Old Maid.*

FOR BUSY MOTHERS.

Hints for Rainy Days. No. 3.

If there are several children, you can fix up a booth, even if of chairs with a shawl over them. Let them cut out ballots. Print or write the name of the picture, why it should be chosen for the cover, and all that can be found out about it. Make it a penalty, the misspelling of a word or misplacement of a capital to render the ballot worthless, and not to be counted. Teach them how to fold and vote. If each child has a different picture, it is well to let the merits of the plea decide the case, the mother being judge. It will not take as long as it would to quiet the restless ones. In summer let them press leaves of any and every kind they choose. Then, when the dismal day dawns

let them take the leaves out, tell how one is different from the other, how the veins run, and then give a little talk, and require them to write down all they can remember of what you told them. You need not necessarily be up in botany to *do* this. Every one with eyes to use can easily do *so* much.

F. C. D.

Mrs. I. B. Brown, 402 East Olive Street, Atlantic, Cass County, Iowa, writes: "We belong to the Seventh Day Baptist Church; and, if there are any Advent sisters of *Cheerful Letter*, we would like to hear from them, or any other who would write. My age is sixty-two; and my daughter is sixteen. She is very fond of reading, but we are not able to buy any kind of reading matter. We would be glad of good reading magazines or good books, especially Wood's 'Natural History.'"

(Had Mrs. Brown sent this letter to the Book Club Secretary instead of to the editor, it would have been printed sooner. We will ask, however, whether there is no public library in Atlantic, Iowa. If not, the members of every church should make a beginning. Many people cannot afford to buy books; but most churches have a few members who can contribute a small sum yearly. Where no church library exists, make a tiny beginning, by lending the books we send you. Then others will do the same; and, like the loaves and fishes, they will increase and multiply.

Reference sent.)

Mrs. Carrie Smith, East Peru, Iowa, writes: "A lady sent to me to-day for more religious reading. I had sent her 'Stepping Heavenward' and 'A Little Pilgrim.' I should like very much to have 'Ben-Hur' and 'The Fair God' and 'The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life' to lend. I find more pleasure in this than I do in reading the books; for, when some one else reads a book, I can talk about it with them, and it does us both more good than if either had only read it herself. I am thinking of starting a free library on a small scale. There is none within eleven miles, and one would be greatly appreciated.

(We hope you will succeed, and obtain the books you desire.)

I want to enlist your sympathy and help for a widow living at Martin, Greer County, Texas,—Mrs. A. O. Pringle. She is living in what they call a "dug-out." She has two children of twelve and fifteen. They are very poor, and have no advantages of school, and nothing to read, I know. She is a good woman, and has been in better circumstances. Her heaviest burden is the thought of raising her children in ignorance. Mrs. G. W. Hudson, Tennessee Colony, Texas.

(This letter would have been printed in our July number, had it been sent to the secretary of the Book Club instead of the editor.)

The address of Mrs. Nannie D. Huggins has been changed from Valley Farm, Sicily, Ohio, to Valley Farm, Sardinia, Ohio. This is the same place, but a new post-office.

I saw your offer of some books, and wrote at once, requesting you to send two of them to my daughter. You either did not receive my letter or, from lack of time or some other reason, did not reply.

(Is it not possible that some one else asked for the books?

There are several reasons why correspondents may not receive books asked for.

1. When they send no reference. 2. When they do not address the person who offers the book. 3. When, in asking for books *not offered*, they do not address the Book Club, but write to the editor. 4. When there are twenty-five requests for one book, and only one copy to send. 5. When they have been receiving more books than others, others will receive the preference.)

My second daughter is very anxious to read "Uncle Tom's Cabin." It has been offered several times; and I have written for it once, but was too late. Can you put me in the way of obtaining it?

(The way to obtain it is to write a request to the Book Club, like those you see printed every month, expressed thus: "I should like to have a copy of Uncle Tom's Cabin. Address Mrs. —— —— [town and State].)

The last writer addressed the editor. Had she written to the Book Club, she would probably have received "Uncle Tom's Cabin" long since.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The personal address of our treasurer will be Miss Louise Howe, Box 21, Nahant, Mass., during the months of July, August, and September. But subscriptions may be addressed to her or left for her at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., *at any season.*

Please do not send notices of discontinuance nor changes of address to the EDITOR, *but to the* TREASURER, *as above.*

The address of the Editor will be Magnolia, Mass., until October 1.

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE: —

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to our secretary, Miss Langmaid.

Our Book Club department has grown so large that we shall ask of all who in the future write to us for books to send the name of some minister as a reference,— when possible, the minister of the church to which they belong.

We fear that some of our subscribers have the impression that by subscribing for *The Cheerful Letter* they will be sure to receive books. The Book Club has proved an attractive department of our paper; and many of our subscribers are interested in sending books to those who are unable otherwise to obtain them. But we engage only to keep the Book Club open for offers and requests, and that under certain conditions.

We remind all who send parcels or boxes with books, papers, etc., to correspondents or to libraries, that it is absolutely necessary to write at the same time to the receiver, enclosing the receipt which shows that the express or freight charges on the package have been paid. For want of this precaution, valuable packages have never been received. It is not probable that any of our *Cheerful Letter* friends send packages without prepaying them, but it is a common mistake of the express agents to charge the receiver for a prepaid package.

N.B.—PLEASE READ DIRECTIONS AT BEGINNING OF BOOK CLUB BEFORE WRITING FOR BOOKS.

The editor receives nearly every day notes which should go to the Book Club secretary (Mrs. Hallett), the treasurer (Miss Howe), or the secretary (Miss Langmaid). This greatly and needlessly increases her work. She would therefore request all readers of *The Cheerful Letter before* they address her to be kind enough to READ THE FOLLOWING

DIRECTIONS.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE, —Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE, —Miss Louise Howe, Box 21, Nahant, Mass., or 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

EDITOR OF "CHEERFUL LETTER,"—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Magnolia, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.

Subscriptions and renewals may be sent to the treasurer as above. The subscription is fifty cents a year.

Notice that requests for membership and for correspondents go to Miss Langmaid, our secretary; requests for books and offers of books, to Mrs. Nichols; and to Miss Clarke only articles for insertion in the paper (not Book Club matter). All such material should be written on *one side only* of the paper, and sent by the first of the month *before* that in which it is printed.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Miss Ellen R. Dewson, Quincy, Mass. Please give full name and address. Many of our members take the paper, in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.

Will all subscribers or receivers of *The Cheerful Letter*, whose copy does not come regularly or comes not correctly addressed, be kind enough to notify Miss Louise Howe, as above.

Send all notices of *changes of address and requests for discontinuance* to Miss Howe. Please do not send these notices to the editor, as it causes delay in the correction.